



**Final 2013 Agricultural Kitchen Cabinet Notes
Lewis & Clark State Office Building, March 18, 2013
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Welcome and Introductions

Sara welcomed our guests and expressed her appreciation for their time. She noted that these meetings were important as they provided the department leadership the opportunity to hear from constituents.

Prior Cabinet Meeting Priorities Revisited

Major Rivers

Ryan Mueller provided an update on the latest news about the major rivers. The Corps will provide minimum service levels on the Missouri until July 1 when the next storage check will occur. The Mississippi River has rebounded from its very low levels this winter. Flood risks on both rivers are characterized as “normal.” The Center continues to monitor surplus water contracts upstream.

There was an extensive discussion of the Jameson Island issue. Sara explained the reasoning behind the department’s decisions. Some members of the group expressed their frustration with not understanding all the aspects of this situation and a few voiced their wish to support a compromise position that would protect all of Missouri’s interests. The decision now is in the hands of the Corps of Engineers, which has not informed the department of their intentions about moving this project forward or the conditions under which they plan to do so.

Water Quality Standards and Nutrient Issues

John Hoke explained that while EPA has discretionary authority, states are responsible for implementing standards. The current Water Quality Standards rulemaking is moving forward with a draft expected about May 1. He anticipates a public hearing in July with a final rule completed near the end of the calendar year. EPA partially approved the nutrient standards for lakes. The department is currently working with stakeholders on those sections rejected by EPA. The plan is to complete the section on lakes and then move onto streams through a stakeholder process. Robert Brundage suggested that the department rescind and redo the lakes section.

Hypoxia

Joe Engeln discussed the current status of the lawsuit and noted that Missouri was a signatory to the 11-state letter that supported the states’ role in developing water quality standards in their states. Steve Taylor noted concerns about the NACWA letter that appeared to favor regulation of agricultural non-point sources.

Soil and Water Conservation Program – Drought and MRBI

Colleen Meredith summarized the 2012 drought assistance program. Roughly 5,400 out of 11,000 projects that were requested were completed, mainly to livestock producers. The amount of aid delivered was roughly \$21.8 million.

Missouri has been extremely successful in getting projects funded under the auspices of the Mississippi River Basin Initiative since it started in 2010.

Legislative Updates

Jay Atkins, Legislative Director for the department, led a discussion of the current fee bills, particularly Senate Bill 147 that would place responsibility for fees on the commissions while providing the legislature the ability to override their decisions. He noted the expected move of the Energy Division to the Department of Economic Development unless the legislature took affirmative action to stop it. He informed the group of Senate Bill 416 that would reduce the number of commissions and promote permit consolidation. He then spoke about Senate Bill 41 that would address some private nuisance issues.

DNR Initiatives Presentations

Sara Pauley, Robert Stout and Ginny Wallace provided background on the major DNR initiatives. Each of these is in development or is being implemented on a pilot basis now.

Our Missouri Waters will become the encompassing way for the department to work with those in each 8-digit HUC watershed to support their water quality and quantity goals. The first watershed summit will occur in the Spring River in May with others to follow in the Big River and Lower Grand River watersheds.

Compliance Assistance will provide business, especially smaller businesses, with greater levels of technical assistance to understand and to meet their environmental goals.

The Community Service Center will build upon our State Revolving Fund efforts and join with partners outside the department to help smaller communities deal with the changing regulatory environment and provide them with the technical, managerial and financial help they need.

Facilitated Discussion of the Draft Agricultural Strategy Document

See the attached document.

After an opening question that showed that most were overly optimistic about MU's Tournament performance, Joe Engeln led a discussion of the major elements of the department's draft agricultural strategy document. The most favorably reviewed ideas are shown below on a scale of 1-5 with 5 representing "Very Beneficial" and 1 representing "Counterproductive."

1. Expand the existing permit exemption for new technology. 4.65
2. Identify specific Issues for focused discussion. 4.33

3. Require a pre-application meeting as part of the CAFO permitting process. 4.24
(Comment: This would be a useful approach were the department to discontinue construction permit requirements.)
4. Prepare for emerging issues. 3.69
(Comments: While no specific issues were identified, the group understood that having both formal and informal communications early helps build trust.)
5. How important is the department's nutrient reduction strategy effort? 3.66
(Comments: A couple of members noted the importance of this effort and the need to continue to engage stakeholders.)
6. Increase resources dedicated to non-point source pollution from agriculture. 3.34
(Comments: the title of this topic is not well-worded. The group supports identifying resources to help meet this goal, but not the wording of the goal.)
7. Create a Nutrient Use Strategy 3.32
(Comments: Most farmers have these, but this may have some use in specific areas.)
8. Give Missouri agriculture a competitive advantage by making it energy efficient. 2.77
(Comments: The group expressed that farmers are being driven by competition and they don't support programs that tilt the playing field. Many stated that farmers are very aware of the energy technologies available.)

The next four questions addressed the environmental issues of greatest importance to them (water quality) and to the state overall (water quantity) as well as the opportunities for the greatest regulatory improvement by the department (permitting) and the criteria for consideration in environmental regulations (practical implementation and cost).

Facilitated Discussion of Department Performance

Each program listed was ranked on a scale of 1-4 with 4 being an excellent program and 1 being poor or unsatisfactory. For each program, their rating is listed together with the percentage of participants who offered an opinion.

Program	Score	Percent responding
Air Pollution Control Program	2.85	54%
Geology and Land Survey	3.00	36%
Hazardous Waste Program	3.33	36%
Water Protection Program	3.18	93%
Water Resources Center	3.00	92%
Energy Division	3.19	36%

Suggestions for Improvement

1. DNR staff that understand modern agriculture
2. Expand the audience included in discussion of Gulf Hypoxia
3. Reduce or remove regulatory barriers
4. Need to identify resources and apply them effectively
5. Look at exemptions for stream bank buffers. (Why can we apply fertilizers, but not manure?)

6. Address sustainability in the broad sense of the word.
7. Educational role

Wrap Up

This fall (September 20th, please save the date), the department will host its first joint Kitchen Cabinet with the members of the Agricultural, Business, Community and Environmental Cabinets.

Sara thanked all those attending for their time and thoughtful discussion of the issues.